UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/010,572	11/09/2001	Carl Cavanagh	5181-97900	4344

7590 06/20/2006

Lawrence J. Merkel
Conley, Rose & Tayon, P.C.
P.O. Box 398
Austin, TX 78767

EXAMINER	
SHARON, AYAL I	

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
2123	

DATE MAILED: 06/20/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/010,572	CAVANAGH ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Ayal I. Sharon	2123	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1)☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on *17 March 2006*.

2a)☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b)☒ This action is non-final.

3)☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4)☒ Claim(s) *1-21,23-30,32 and 33* is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6)☒ Claim(s) *1-21,23-30,32 and 33* is/are rejected.

7)☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8)☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9)☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10)☒ The drawing(s) filed on *09 November 2001* is/are: a)☒ accepted or b)☐ objected to by the Examiner.

Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).

Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11)☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12)☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a)☐ All b)☐ Some * c)☐ None of:

1.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.

2.☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.

3.☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) Paper No(s)/Mail Date *3/17/2006*.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____.

DETAILED ACTION

Introduction

1. Claims 1-21, 23-30, and 32-33 of U.S. Application 10/010,572, originally filed on 11/09/2001, are currently pending.
2. Applicants' arguments in the amendment filed 3/17/06 are persuasive. All rejections based on the Agrawal_1 and Agrawal_2 references have been withdrawn.
3. New rejections have been added. Applicants' arguments are moot in view of the new grounds of rejection.
4. This action is non-final.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

5. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

   The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

6. Claim 21 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The phrase "are configured to" in lines 2 and 6 creates ambiguity as to whether the claim is a method claim or an article of manufacture claim. In addition, in line 5, the phrase "wherein the instructions"

should be followed by a limitation similar to "when executed on said computer, signal ..."

Double Patenting

7. The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. A nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting rejection is appropriate where the conflicting claims are not identical, but at least one examined application claim is not patentably distinct from the reference claim(s) because the examined application claim is either anticipated by, or would have been obvious over, the reference claim(s). See, e.g., *In re Berg*, 140 F.3d 1428, 46 USPQ2d 1226 (Fed. Cir. 1998); *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

   A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) or 1.321(d) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent either is shown to be commonly owned with this application, or claims an invention made as a result of activities undertaken within the scope of a joint research agreement.

   Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

8. Claims 1, 15, 21, 24, 30, and 33 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 1 of copending Application No. 10/008,643. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because claim 1 in the copending application is much broader in scope than the independent claims in the instant application.

Claim 1 in the copending application claims that "each node is configured to perform a simulation as a series of timesteps, wherein a transition between timesteps in the plurality of nodes is synchronized." The claims in the instant application are more specific as to the nature of the synchronization.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

9. Claims 1, 15, 21, 24, 30, and 33 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 1 of copending Application No. 10/008,270. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because claim 1 in the copending application is much broader in scope than the independent claims in the instant application.

Claim 1 in the copending application claims that the nodes "communicate at least signal values during the simulation using a grammar." The claims in the instant application are more specific as to the nature of the communications, and the grammar.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

10. Claims 1, 15, 21, 24, 30, and 33 are provisionally rejected on the ground of nonstatutory obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claim 1 of copending Application No. 10/008,255. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because claim 1

in the copending application is much broader in scope than the independent claims in the instant application.

Claim 1 in the copending application claims that the nodes "communicate during the simulation using a predefined grammar." The claims in the instant application are more specific as to the nature of the communications, and the grammar.

This is a provisional obviousness-type double patenting rejection because the conflicting claims have not in fact been patented.

11. All dependent claims are rejected on the same grounds as the independent claims.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

12. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

13. The prior art used for these rejections is as follows:

- U.S. Patent 6,507,809 to Yoshino et al. Filed 4/8/1999, Issued 1/14/2003. ("**Yoshino**").

14. The claim rejections are hereby summarized for Applicant's convenience. The detailed rejections follow.

15. Claims 1-21, 23-30, and 32-33 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Yoshino.

16. In regards to Claim 1, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

> 1. A distributed simulation system comprising a plurality of nodes,

(See Yoshino, especially: Abstract; col.2, lines 15-24; col.3, lines 60-65; col.7, lines 1-16; col.8, lines 57-67)

> wherein each node of the plurality of nodes is configured to simulate a different portion of a system under test using a simulator program configured to perform a simulation as a series of timesteps, and

(See Yoshino, especially: Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

> wherein each timestep includes at least a first phase and a second phase, and

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

> wherein each node of the plurality of nodes is configured not to cause the simulator program to evaluate a model of the different portion of the system under test during the first phase even if one or more commands are received by that node during the first phase, and

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

> wherein each node of the plurality of nodes is configured to cause the simulator program to evaluate the model during the second phase in response to receiving a command during the second phase, the command including one or more signal values for signals of the model.

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

17. In regards to Claim 2, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

> 2. The distributed simulation system as recited in claim 1 wherein each node of the plurality of nodes is configured not to cause the simulator program to evaluate the model during the second phase if the signal values in the command received by that node are the same as the current values of the signals.

(See Yoshino, especially: Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

18. In regards to Claim 3, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

> 3. The distributed simulation system as recited in claim 1 wherein each node of the plurality of nodes is configured, if one or more output signals of the model change in response to evaluating the model, to transmit a command including at least the signal values of the output signals that change.

(See Yoshino, especially: Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

19. In regards to Claim 4, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

> 4. The distributed simulation system as recited in claim 1 wherein each node of the plurality of nodes is configured to cause the simulator program to evaluate the model two or more times during the second phase in response to two or more commands including signal values.

(See Yoshino, especially: Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

20. In regards to Claim 5,

> 5. The distributed simulation system as recited in claim 1 further comprising a hub coupled to the plurality of nodes, wherein the hub is configured to receive at least one command from each node during the first phase prior to transmitting commands to the plurality of nodes during the first phase.

(See Yoshino, especially: Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

21. In regards to Claim 6,

> 6. The distributed simulation system as recited in claim 5 wherein each node of the plurality of nodes is configured to transmit a no-operation command to the hub if that node has no other command to transmit.

Claim 7 is rejected on the same basis as claim 5.

22. In regards to Claim 7,

> 7. The distributed simulation system as recited in claim 5 wherein the hub is configured to transmit at least one command to each node of the plurality of nodes.

Claim 7 is rejected on the same basis as claim 5.

23. In regards to Claim 8,

> 8. The distributed simulation system as recited in claim 7 wherein a first command transmitted by the hub to a first node of the plurality of nodes corresponds to a second

command received from one of the plurality of nodes if the second command is routed to the first node; and wherein the first command is a no-operation command otherwise.

Claim 8 is rejected on the same basis as claim 5.

24. In regards to Claim 9,

9. The distributed simulation system as recited in claim 1 further comprising a hub coupled to the plurality of nodes, wherein the hub is configured to receive at least one command from each node during the second phase prior to transmitting commands to the plurality of nodes during the second phase.

Claim 9 is rejected on the same basis as claim 5.

25. In regards to Claim 10,

10. The distributed simulation system as recited in claim 9 wherein each node of the plurality of nodes is configured to transmit a no-operation command to the hub if that node has no other command to transmit.

Claim 10 is rejected on the same basis as claim 5.

26. In regards to Claim 11,

11. The distributed simulation system as recited in claim 9 wherein the hub is configured to transmit at least one command to each node of the plurality of nodes.

Claim 11 is rejected on the same basis as claim 5.

27. In regards to Claim 12,

12. The distributed simulation system as recited in claim 11 wherein a first command transmitted by the hub to a first node of the plurality of nodes corresponds to a second command received from one of the plurality of nodes if the second command is routed to the first node, and wherein the first command is a no-operation command otherwise.

Claim 12 is rejected on the same basis as claim 5.

28. In regards to Claim 13,

13. The distributed simulation system as recited in claim 1 further comprising a hub coupled to the plurality of nodes and configured to signal an end of each of the first phase and the second phase.

Claim 13 is rejected on the same basis as claim 5.

29. In regards to Claim 14,

14. The distributed simulation system as recited in claim 13 wherein the hub is configured to receive at least one command from each node prior to transmitting commands to the plurality of nodes, and wherein the hub is configured to signal an end to one of the first

phase or the second phase responsive to receiving a no-operation command from each of the plurality of nodes.

Claim 14 is rejected on the same basis as claim 5.

30. In regards to Claim 15, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

> 15. A computer readable medium storing instructions which, when executed on a computer, process a first one or more commands received during a first phase of a timestep without causing a simulator program to evaluate a model, and cause the simulator program to evaluate the model during a second phase of the timestep in response to receiving a second command including one or more signal values for signals of the model, wherein the second command is received during the second phase of the timestep.

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

31. In regards to Claim 16, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

> 16. The computer readable medium as recited in claim 15 wherein the instructions, when executed, do not cause the simulator program to evaluate the model during the second phase if the signal values in the second command are the same as the current values of the signals in the model.

(See Yoshino, especially: Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

32. In regards to Claim 17, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

> 17. The computer readable medium as recited in claim 15 wherein the instructions, when executed, if one or more output signals of the model change in response to evaluating the model, transmit a command including at least the signal values of the output signals that change.

(See Yoshino, especially: Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

33. In regards to Claim 18, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

> 18. The carrier medium as recited in claim 17 wherein the instructions, when executed, if no output signals change value during the second phase, transmit a no-operation command.

(See Yoshino, especially: Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

34. In regards to Claim 19, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

> 19. The computer readable medium as recited in claim 15 wherein the instructions, when executed, cause the simulator program to evaluate the model two or more times during the second phase in response to two or more commands including signal values and optional signal strengths.

(See Yoshino, especially: Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

35. In regards to Claim 20, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

> 20. The computer readable medium as recited in claim 15 wherein, in response to a third command indicating an end of the first or second phase, is configured to return to the simulator program.

(See Yoshino, especially: Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

36. In regards to Claim 21, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

> 21. A computer readable medium storing instructions which, when executed on a computer, are configured to signal an end of either a first phase or a second phase of a timestep in a distributed simulation system by transmitting a predefined command indicating an end of the first phase or the second phase to each of a plurality of nodes in the distributed simulation system,

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

> and wherein the instructions are configured to signal the end of either the first phase or the second phase responsive to receiving a nooperation packet from each of the plurality of nodes subsequent to transmitting a command other than a no-operation packet to at least one of the plurality of nodes.

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

37. In regards to Claim 23, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

> 23. The computer readable medium as recited in claim 21 wherein the instructions route commands from one of the plurality of nodes to others of the plurality of nodes.

(See Yoshino, especially: Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

38. In regards to Claim 24, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

> 24. A method comprising:
>
> receiving a first one or more commands in a node of a distributed simulation system during a first phase of a timestep;

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

> processing the first one or more commands without causing a simulator program to evaluate a model;

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

receiving a second command during a second phase of the timestep; and

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

processing the second command including causing the simulator program to evaluate the model if the second command includes one or more signal values for signals of the model.

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

39. In regards to Claim 25, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

25. The method as recited in claim 24 wherein processing the second command does not include causing the simulator program to evaluate the model if the signal values in the second command are the same as the current values of the signals in the model.

(See Yoshino, especially: Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

40. In regards to Claim 26, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

26. The method as recited in claim 24 further comprising, if the evaluation of the model during the second phase results in one or more output signals of the model changing, transmitting a command including at least the signal values of the output signals that change.

(See Yoshino, especially: Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

41. In regards to Claim 27, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

27. The method as recited in claim 26 further comprising, if no output signals change value during the second phase, transmitting a no-operation command.

(See Yoshino, especially: Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

42. In regards to Claim 28, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

28. The method as recited in claim 24 further comprising causing the simulator program to evaluate the model two or more times during the second phase in response to two or more commands including signal values.

(See Yoshino, especially: Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

43. In regards to Claim 29, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

29. The method as recited in claim 24 further comprising, in response to a command

indicating an end of the first or second phase, returning to the simulator program.

(See Yoshino, especially: Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

44. In regards to Claim 30, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

30. A method comprising;

signaling an end of a first phase of a timestep in a distributed simulation system by a hub of the distributed simulation system,

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

the signaling including transmitting a predefined command to each of a plurality of nodes in the distributed simulation system,

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

wherein signaling the end of the first phase is responsive to receiving a no-operation packet from each of the plurality of nodes subsequent to transmitting a command other than a no-operation packet to at least one of the plurality of nodes.

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

signaling an end of a second phase of a timestep in a distributed simulation system by the hub,

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

the signaling including transmitting a predefined command to each of the plurality of nodes in the distributed simulation system.

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

45. In regards to Claim 32, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

32. The method as recited in claim 30 wherein signaling the end of the second phase is responsive to receiving a no-operation packet from each of the plurality of nodes subsequent to transmitting a command other than a no-operation packet to at least one of the plurality of nodes.

Claim 32 is rejected on the same basis as claim 30.

46. In regards to Claim 33, Yoshino teaches the following limitations:

33. A distributed simulation system comprising a plurality of nodes wherein each node of the plurality of nodes is configured to simulate a different portion of a system under test using a simulator program configured to perform a simulation as a series of timesteps,

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

and wherein the plurality of nodes are configured to communicate using commands, and a first node of the plurality of nodes is configured to cause the simulator program to evaluate the model in response to receiving a first command including one or more signal values for signals of the model during a first timestep, and

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

wherein the first node is configured to cause the simulator program to re-evaluate the model in response to receiving a second command including one or more signal values for signals of the model during the first timestep.

(See Yoshino, especially: Fig.3B and Fig.4, and the associated text at col.7, line 38 to col.9, line 2; and also Figs.5-8, and col.9, line, line 9 to col.11, line 8)

Conclusion

47. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. The following prior art consists of co-pending applications filed by the inventors.

48. U.S. Patent 7,020,722 to Sivier et al.

49. U.S. PG-PUB 2003/0093252 to Frankel et al.

50. U.S. PG-PUB 2003/0093253 to Freyensee et al.

Correspondence Information

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Ayal I. Sharon whose telephone number is

(571) 272-3714. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday through Thursday, and the first Friday of a biweek, 8:30 am – 5:30 pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Paul Rodriguez can be reached at (571) 272-3753.

Any response to this office action should be faxed to (571) 273- 8300, or mailed to:

USPTO
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

or hand carried to:

USPTO
Customer Service Window
Randolph Building
401 Dulany Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the Tech Center 2100 Receptionist, whose telephone number is (571) 272-2100.

Ayal I. Sharon
Art Unit 2123
June 9, 2006

Paul L. Rodriguez 6/9/06
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2125 2123